

NORTHEAST COMMUNITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION RJSP 2018-01

Whereas, the NECC has historically been very concerned that its rights and duties as a community council with respect to that regional park known as Russian Jack Spring Park have been undermined and may have been violated and obstructed by Parks and Recreation staff, and

Whereas, these concerns are heightened by the fact that Parks and Recreation staff have not presented to the NECC various plans for changes made to the park over the last five years, and

Whereas, NECC repeatedly opposed both the Plans promoted by the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Parks and Recreation Department (P&R) for Russian Jack Springs Park (RJSP) and the planning process adopted by that agency, and

Whereas, the last MASTER PLAN for RJSP was adopted by the MOA in 1979 and a site plan was allegedly adopted in 1997 by the Planning and Zoning Commission (P&ZC) though the planning process for the latter specifically excluded NECC from notice contrary to the provisions of MOA ordinance, and

Whereas, the community at large during hours of public testimony before the Parks Commission made it clear that it wished to see a systemic plan addressing RJSP before any further planning or development was undertaken, and

Whereas various members of the Parks Commission have indicated that the Master Plan is "dated" and the Commission's most recent resolution on RJSP called for additional planning and review before any further development or construction, and

Whereas, P&R has continued to expend resources changing RJSP without public consultation, and

Whereas, the RJSP MASTER PLAN as well as the 1997 site plan appear to call for completion of the adopted trail plan including the creation of a second tunnel under RJSP and the completion of trail lighting, including the lighting of the paved trail in North RJSP, and

Whereas, NECC believes that Parks and Recreation plans to revisit the RJSP Master Plan in the Fall of 2018, and

Whereas, NECC believes that it has an obligation to provide community comment on changes made to the park of late, including but not limited to changes in trail lighting, changes in siting of garbage receptacles, changes in siting of amenities, changes in signing, and management of the golf course,

NOW THEREFORE THE NECC HEREBY RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

In as much as the only community group to have addressed lighting levels on RJSP trail (via VIP Committee on expenditure of funds on playground at NRJSP, said playground opposed by the NECC) recommended a test placement of lunar-resonant lighting or other low intensity LED lighting on the North side paved trail, which recommendation was ignored by P&R, and as the replacement of the lamps in RJSP negotiated between ML&P and P&R called for "like for like" which in fact resulted in brighter lights in the park, and as ML&P advise that said LED's intensity can be controlled remotely by ML&P, that P&R should immediately pursue a test regimen whereby various intensities on different segments

of the park premiss can be tested, and that said tests be coordinate to the mutual satisfaction of representatives from the RJCC, the NECC, Skijax, Jr. Nordic, and other community organizations,

In as much as there has been a wide disagreement as to what can or cannot be set forth in a Master Plan, as well as to the degree to which Master Plans can be ignored when it comes to planning for development, P&R is encouraged to conduct public workshops BEFORE the Master Plan process so as to clarify the purpose and usage of Master Plans, practically, legally, and theoretically.

In as much as the attitude of P&R has apparently repeatedly changed as far as its duty to solicit comment from the NECC, P&R is encouraged to appear before the NECC to specifically address its position on what it will, may, and need not address to the NECC's attention, as well as an explanation for its failure to bring matters to the NECC's attention with respect to RJSP over the past 5 years.

In anticipation of the reopening of the RJSP Master Plan, NECC requests that P&R provide an historical analysis of the impact an efficacy of the Master Plans adopted for RJSP, including but not limited to the degree to which any and all development either was consistent with such plan, or involved an attempt to change the plan to suit the short term demands o the development proposed. Further, NECC expects a full and detailed explanation as to the motivation behind P&R's apparent sudden interest in "revisiting" the RJSP Master Plan

NECC applauds the efforts by P&R to use GIS applications to manage and share data regarding the use and maintenance of P&R resources, and encourages P&R and the MOA generally to involve the public to a greater degree in the planning and development of such applications, as the public promoted the use of such technology two decades ago.

At the present time the NECC opposes the building of new trails, or conversion of existing trails, to designed use mountain biking trails or single track trails in Russian Jack Springs Park (Reference RTP 2017 RJSP). NECC has not been consulted as to how the proposed trails will fall within the scope of the current Park Master Plan, those involved in the project have specifically not included NECC in planning or review of the project, despite municipal provision that mandate such participation, and the park is already heavily impacted such that its historic aesthetic is rapidly deteriorating. Bicycle traffic in the park is already moving too fast, and users at Kincaid have been cautioned about their speed, while others have written to the newspaper about issues with single track trails (see e.g., <https://www.adn.com/opinions/2017/05/02/no-more-single-track-trails-please/> and <https://www.adn.com/opinions/2017/08/31/singletrack-trails-in-far-north-spell-high-speed-collisions-with-bears/>). Publication of the plans was virtually non-existent as evidence by the application itself, and the project is moving too fast without adequate public review.

Done this 15 day of February 2018.

Yes Votes: 10 , No Votes: 0 , Abstentions: 2

President – Rick Irwin

Secretary – Kevin Smestad